

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

2000HANOI01193 - UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED PTQ6218

PAGE 01 HANOI 01193 01 OF 02 010957Z  
ACTION HCR-01

|      |         |        |         |         |         |         |         |
|------|---------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| INFO | LOG-00  | NP-00  | ACQ-00  | CIAE-00 | DODE-00 | ANHR-00 | SRPP-00 |
|      | DS-00   | EAP-00 | FBIE-00 | UTED-00 | VC-00   | H-01    | TEDE-00 |
|      | INR-00  | VCE-00 | NSAE-00 | SS-00   | VO-03   | DSCC-00 | DRL-02  |
|      | NFAT-00 | SAS-00 | /007W   |         |         |         |         |

-----5DC340 010957Z /38

FM AMEMBASSY HANOI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0002  
INFO ASEAN COLLECTIVE  
AMCONSUL HO CHI MINH CITY

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 HANOI 001193

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR EAP/BCLTV, H, DRL  
H PASS TO INTERESTED MEMBERS OF CONGRESS AND STAFF

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [VM](#) [HUMANR](#)

SUBJECT: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY REJECTS CONGRESSIONAL CRITICISM OF VIETNAM ON HUMAN RIGHTS

[1](#)1. SUMMARY: VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE VIETNAMESE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY PHAN QUANG CALLED IN THE AMBASSADOR MAY 18 TO PROTEST HOUSE RESOLUTION 295, WHICH CRITICIZED VIETNAM FOR HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AND POLITICAL REPRESSION. ON BEHALF OF THE ASSEMBLY, QUANG "REJECTED" THE RESOLUTION, AND IN  
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 HANOI 01193 01 OF 02 010957Z  
PARTICULAR CONGRESSIONAL CRITICISM OF ARTICLE 4 OF THE VIETNAMESE CONSTITUTION, WHICH ENSHRINES THE COMMUNIST PARTY AS THE COUNTRY'S ONLY POLITICAL PARTY. QUANG SAID THE RESOLUTION "HINDERED THE PROCESS OF NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS" BETWEEN THE U.S. AND VIETNAM. FOLLOWING THE MEETING, VIETNAMESE MEDIA WIDELY REPORTED HIS REMARKS, IN A MUCH MORE STRIDENT TONE THAN GIVEN BY QUANG. THE AMBASSADOR REITERATED THAT IN THE UNITED STATES, MEMBERS OF CONGRESS FREELY EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS AND THAT THE U.S. WOULD CONTINUE TO WORK FOR NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS. HE AGREED HE WOULD PASS ON QUANG'S VIEWS TO MEMBERS OF CONGRESS. END SUMMARY.

AMBASSADOR CALLED IN TO PROTEST HOUSE RESOLUTION  
-----

[1](#)2. PHAN QUANG, ONE OF THE VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, REQUESTED A MEETING WITH THE AMBASSADOR MAY 18 TO PROTEST HOUSE RESOLUTION 295, "RELATING TO CONTINUING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AND POLITICAL REPRESSION IN THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM." THE RESOLUTION PASSED MAY 3 BY A VOTE OF 415 TO 3. AMONG OTHER THINGS, THE RESOLUTION CALLS ON THE PRESIDENT TO "RESTATE AND MAKE CLEAR" TO VIETNAMESE LEADERS THAT "THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE FIRMLY COMMITTED TO POLITICAL, RELIGIOUS, AND ECONOMIC FREEDOM" FOR VIETNAM'S CITIZENS. QUANG SAID A NUMBER OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DELEGATES, WHO ARE MEETING FOR ONE OF THEIR TWO MONTH-LONG SESSIONS DURING MAY, HAD EXPRESSED ANGER WITH THE RESOLUTION, AND HE HAD BEEN ASKED TO SHARE THESE CONCERNS WITH THE AMBASSADOR.

[1](#)3. THOUGH QUANG WAS POLITE AND MILD-MANNERED DURING HIS  
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 HANOI 01193 01 OF 02 010957Z  
REMARKS, HE READ FROM A PREPARED TEXT IN STRONGLY CRITICIZING THE U.S. CONGRESS FOR "BRAZEN INTERFERENCE" IN VIETNAM'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS. QUANG CLAIMED THAT "REGRETTABLY, THE MOVE OF THE (HOUSE) HAS, FAR FROM MAKING CONTRIBUTIONS, HINDERED THE PROCESS OF NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS" BETWEEN THE U.S. AND VIETNAM. HE CLAIMED VIETNAM HAS NO POLITICAL PRISONERS OR "PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE," AS NOTED IN THE RESOLUTION; HE SAID ALL OF THOSE IMPRISONED IN VIETNAM HAD BEEN CONVICTED ACCORDING TO VIETNAMESE LAW.

[1](#)4. QUANG SAID ASSEMBLY MEMBERS WERE PARTICULARLY ANGERED BY CONGRESSIONAL CRITICISM OF ARTICLE 4 OF THE VIETNAMESE CONSTITUTION, WHICH ENSHRINES THE COMMUNIST PARTY (CPV) AS THE COUNTRY'S ONLY POLITICAL PARTY. (NOTE: 85 PERCENT OF MEMBERS OF THE ASSEMBLY ARE CPV MEMBERS.) QUANG SAID THE CPV HAD PLAYED THE LEADING ROLE IN VIETNAM'S STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE, FREEDOM AND REUNIFICATION, AND IN CARRYING OUT "DOI MOI" (RENOVATION) REFORMS SINCE THE MID-1980'S. HE CLAIMED THE RESOLUTION'S CALL FOR VIETNAM TO HOLD "FREE AND HONEST ELECTIONS" WAS NOT SOMETHING DEMANDED BY THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE, SINCE THE PEOPLE HAD SHOWN THEIR SUPPORT

FOR THE CPV SINCE THE "NATIONAL LIBERATION" STRUGGLE. HE SAID THIS WAS A "GROSS VIOLATION" OF THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE'S RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF CHOICE AS EXPRESSED IN LAST NOVEMBER'S NATION-WIDE GENERAL ELECTIONS FOR PEOPLE'S COUNCIL SEATS. (COMMENT: THOSE ELECTIONS, PARTICIPATION IN WHICH WAS MANDATORY FOR CITIZENS, WERE CONDUCTED WITH NO TRANSPARENCY IN THE VOTE COUNTING. END COMMENT.)

15. THE AMBASSADOR RESPONDED THAT IN THE UNITED STATES MEMBERS OF CONGRESS ARE FREE TO EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS AND THAT  
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 HANOI 01193 01 OF 02 010957Z  
THIS RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED BY MANY MEMBERS. HE SAID THAT, DESPITE THE CRITICAL TONE OF THE RESOLUTION, MOST AMERICANS AND MEMBERS OF CONGRESS WERE COMMITTED TO CONTINUING TO WORK FOR FULL NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS. HE NOTED THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS FULL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH VIETNAM.

16. AFTER THE MEETING, THE EMBASSY WAS INFORMED THAT THE MEETING WOULD BE PUBLICIZED IN THE PRESS. OVER THE NEXT SEVERAL DAYS, VIETNAMESE STATE-CONTROLLED NEWSPAPERS, RADIO AND PRIME-TIME EVENING NEWS ON TELEVISION USED THE MEETING TO BLAST THE CONGRESS FOR THE RESOLUTION. THE CPV MOUTHPIECE "NHAN DAN" (THE PEOPLE) AND OTHER PAPERS BLASTED THE "ARROGANT INTERVENTION" AND "ABSURD DEMANDS" OF THE RESOLUTION.

17. COMMENT: VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT AND CPV CRITICISM OF THE U.S. OVER ACTIVISM ON HUMAN RIGHTS IS PAR FOR THE COURSE IN HANOI, THOUGH THIS PROTEST WAS PARTICULARLY STRONG. PART OF THE REASON IS THAT CRITICIZING THE LEADING ROLE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY GOES WHERE NO VIETNAMESE IS ALLOWED TO GO. SUCH CRITICISM IS SEEN AS PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE, SINCE IN VIETNAM THE CPV'S "LEADING ROLE" IS SACROSANCT. ALSO A "HOT BUTTON" ISSUE IS SRV CONCERN OVER THE RESOLUTION'S APPROVING WORDS ABOUT THE INITIATION IN WESTMINSTER, CALIFORNIA OF A MEMORIAL TO AMERICAN AND SOUTH VIETNAMESE SOLDIERS WHO "SACRIFICED THEIR LIVES FOR THE CAUSE OF FREEDOM DURING THE VIETNAM WAR." AS NOTED EARLIER SEPTTEL, LIKE THE PARTY'S  
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 HANOI 01193 02 OF 02 010957Z  
LEADING ROLE, THE OFFICIAL VIEW OF THE "NATIONAL LIBERATION" VICTORY IS A THIRD RAIL OF VIETNAMESE POLITICS. END  
COMMENT.

18. ACTION REQUEST: QUANG ASKED THE AMBASSADOR TO SHARE HIS MESSAGE WITH MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, AND WE REQUEST H TO SHARE THIS MESSAGE WITH INTERESTED MEMBERS AND STAFF.  
PETERSON

UNCLASSIFIED